

Information Report

Title: Interim Ladders at the Kincardine Pier Motion

Report Number: Parks & Facilities-2023-22

Director: Community Services

Manager: Recreation & Community Programs

Meeting Date:

Wednesday, December 13, 2023

Executive Summary:

Council has directed upgrades to the safety features at the Piers, as well as beach access points. Staff have prepared information to demonstrate how some of the activities may be coordinated with input that is being provided through the Pier Safety Ad-hoc Committee as well as the Smart Beach Program.

Context and Background Information:

In response to the motion moved by Amanda Steinhoff-Gray and seconded by Jennifer Prenger regarding safety concerns at the Kincardine Station Beach; Staff are working with the Pier Safety Ad-hoc Committee in order to address and resolve some of the concerns identified.

Council's Motion on October 11, 2023, read:

"Whereas a revised Aquatic Safety Audit Report, dated 2JUN2016, was prepared by the Life Saving Society of Canada, with recommendations to improve water safety along the beachfront and the piers at Station Beach; and

Whereas Staff had recommended, and previous Councils had chosen to implement several of the recommendations in the report.

Now, Therefore be it Resolved THAT Council direct Staff to ensure the following recommendations agreed to by previous Councils have been implemented per the specific suggestions contained in the report, and are in good working order by 15NOV2023, with particular emphasis on:

1. *The No Swimming Zone*

- 1.1. *Primary Recommendation # 2: A "No Swimming" zone should be designated at least 100m south of the South Pier and 100m north of the North Pier.*

1.2. Secondary Recommendation # 1 iv): Pier Signage – No Swimming and Warning – Strong Currents signage should be installed on the floor of the pier or on vertical signposts along the lake and harbor sides of both piers.

2. The Safe Swimming Area

2.1. Primary Recommendation # 3: The swimming area intended for use by patrons should be clearly designated through signs, beach flags, and buoy markers.

3. The Rip Current Safety Signage

3.1. Secondary Recommendation # 1 ii): Existing Rip Current Safety Signage. Simplified Rip Current signage should be provided at each access point and in other locations along the boardwalk. Sufficient signage should be located such that the warning information is visible for patrons approaching the signage from either the waterfront or the parking lot areas.

And further that Council direct Staff to complete an assessment and report back to Council by 31DEC2023. Of any actions necessary to implement the following:

- 1. Upgrade the current exit points from the piers (i.e., the ladders) including use of ladder extensions, with such assessment to include the required work and costs to make necessary repairs, purchase additional ladder extensions, etc.*
- 2. Improve the signage associated with the Lifesaving Stations on both piers, to include a listing of the equipment staged at these stations in addition to what to do when equipment is missing and instruction on where to locate the AED equipment.*
- 3. Repair the excising spalling damage to the concrete decks of both piers.*
- 4. Paint a 100mm wide yellow strip along the perimeter edge of both piers for enhanced visibility.*

And further that Council direct Staff to review, revise if required, and present to Council by 01MAR2024, the inspection program that ensures that any deficiencies in the above will be identified and addressed.”

On September 13, 2023, Council approved the establishment of an Ad-hoc Committee for the purpose of seeking recommendations of pier safety at the Kincardine Waterfront. The expectation is that with the collective wisdom of a Pier Safety Ad-hoc Committee, with input from subject matter experts, Council will receive recommendations for consideration in advancing concerns with existing signage, structure, amenities, and usage of the existing Piers.

To date, the Ad-hoc Group has met twice and anticipate presenting recommendations to Council at the end of Q1 2024.

Staff acknowledge that during Council discussion on the notice of motion brought forward that staff were asked if the timing identified for completion of the projects was reasonable and at the time staff noted that the tasks could be completed. Unfortunately, further consideration of the timing for implementation and completion of those tasks has identified that the time of year and resource capacity will not allow all elements of the direction to be fulfilled by December 2023.

The timing to perform work on the piers during late Fall/early Winter poses potential risks to operations staff by placing them in hazardous environments such as the piers during winter months. The outdoor elements at this time of year do not generally align with timing for painting on exterior surfaces.

Additionally, some areas identified in the Motion may not align with the requested advice from the Pier Safety Ad-hoc Committee, which will take into account input from subject experts.

However, in respect to the Motion, staff wish to provide the following updates:

1. The No Swimming Zone

1.1. Primary Recommendation # 2: A “No Swimming” zone should be designated at least 100m south of the South Pier and 100m north of the North Pier.

1.2. Secondary Recommendation #1 iv): Pier Signage – No Swimming and Warning – Strong Currents signage should be installed on the floor of the pier or on vertical signposts along the lake and harbor sides of both piers.

The Ad-hoc has had lengthy discussions regarding the non-designated swimming areas along the Pier. It is anticipated if this is a final recommendation of the Ad-hoc Group, this can be easily initiated prior to the summer season in 2024 with considerable notification to the public.

Sign design and appropriate location is also being carefully discussed by the Ad-hoc to ensure effective communication is in strategic locations.

2. The Safe Swimming Area

2.1. Primary Recommendation #3: The swimming area intended for use by patrons should be clearly designated through signs, beach flags and buoy markers.

A safe swimming area is also considered as part of the discussions with the Ad-hoc group as well as effective design to ensure buoys remain in place during excessively inclement weather. Consequently, the notification system of either flags, markers or lighting system will be anticipated to be part of the final Smart Beach Program.

3. The Rip Current Safety Signage

3.1. Secondary Recommendation #1 ii): Existing Rip Current Safety Signage.

Simplified Rip Current signage should be provided at each access point and in other locations along the boardwalk. Sufficient signage should be location such that the warning information is visible for patrons approaching the signage from either the waterfront or the parking lot areas.

It is anticipated that the Waterfront Maintenance Plan will provide direction to preferred signage for all of Kincardine’s beach access points, while being cognizant of a proposed new boardwalk design. Each beach access should be identified with either an identification number or a name to the access for the purposes of maintenance as well as for emergency purposes. This should be identified at the entrance of beach access as well as beach exits.

Council directed the following with respect to ladders on the piers:

1. *Upgrade the current exit points from the piers (i.e., the ladders) including use of ladder extensions, with such assessment to include the required work and costs to make necessary repairs, purchase additional ladder extensions, etc.*

The Pier Safety Ad-hoc Group has had considerable discussions regarding the most appropriate design for step extensions. Consideration has been given to the impact of weather elements, opportunities for extensions as well as visible highlights from both the water and the pier surface. Staff will continue to work with the Ad-hoc group in developing a plan for the preferred option for ladders with installation considered for the 2024 season.

2. *Improve the signage associated with the Lifesaving Stations on both piers, to include a listing of the equipment staged at these stations in addition to what to do when equipment is missing, and instruction on where to locate the AED equipment.*

It is anticipated that this will also be an action by the Ad-hoc Group. Consideration will be given to ensure that current locations are considered the most appropriate. Signage will accompany them once that has been determined. This signage will be in place for the 2024 season.

3. *Repair the existing spalling damage to the concrete decks of both piers.*

Staff have reviewed this request with engineers. Costing to provide a review of the issue with spalling will be in the range of \$4000-\$5000. Due to the fact that the Ad-hoc Group is still developing recommendations, staff note that it would be pertinent to pause this until such time usage of the pier consideration has been fully reviewed and presented to Council.

4. *Paint a 100mm wide yellow strip along with perimeter edge of both piers for enhanced visibility.*

This task can be easily completed prior to the 2024 season.

Consultation Overview:

Staff will continue to work closely with Smart Beach representatives, Pier Safety Ad-hoc Committee, Boardwalk Design Engineers and Lake Huron Coastal Centre, where applicable.

Origin:

Council Motion, October 11, 2023.

Attachments: N/A

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